

William Bill's Story

Site was created on June 13, 2019

Welcome to our CaringBridge website. We are using it to keep family and friends updated in one place. We appreciate your support and words of hope and encouragement. Thank you for visiting.

Bill has been diagnosed with mixed dementia (Alzheimer's and neuro-vascular dementia). His brilliant long-term memory and amazing lawyer communication skills are strong. He has some recall regarding events over the last ten years, but most are fuzzy. The most amazing gift of this horrible disease is that Bill is unaware of most events over the past five years and does not recall his Alzheimer's. We believe that he seems to reside in his "Mind Eye" somewhere in his late '30-the '40s. We love this -in his mind, he is young and running every day and serving his community. Most impacted is Bill's short-term memory.

We gather at this website to share stories we can print and share with Bill. We have a beautiful book that he keeps in his room with photos and memories. It has been difficult for us to find everyone and connect.

Thank you, Kim & Michelle.



Why we would like to share this story...

Journal Entry by Kim Joseph --- September 12, 2019

This is not going to be easy to write or read.

My name is Kimberly Joseph, I am Bill Deckman's niece. My sister - Michelle and I have been caring for Bill since his stroke and cardiac event in February 2019. Bill now resides in wonderful rehab independent facility in Beachwood, Ohio.

I write this story because this awful disease has taken away Bill's ability to share his story. I. We are grateful Bill is in a safe environment where he has support and love that is long overdue.

Last 10 years ago or so:

Many of us have witnessed sadness (maybe not the right word for everyone) when Bill cut people out of his life that wanted or tried to help him. But thankfully, someone BRAVE figured out that Bill was suffering a major memory problem. I hope that someone reading might also find the courage from deep listening to do the same for someone who suffers from a neurological disorder. These disorders are so beyond hard to diagnose. Most early-onset diagnoses take 10 years plus.

Over the last 10 years, most of us today witnessed firsthand how Alzheimer's took over Bill's mind/memory. I believe for me it started with a question about an odd conversation or a head-shaking interaction, maybe a "No Show" or an unexpected visit from Bill. Many phone calls stating he was in Chicago in the morning and Florida two hours later. Lost his keys, phone, and wallet.

In 2009, our Mom (a hospice nurse) pre-diagnosed Bill with early-onset Alzheimers. You can imagine that this important conversation did not go over so well. Sadly, my Mom (Bill's sister) passed away in 2014 from a rare neurological disorder before they could truly reconcile. I learned about this news in 2014 and I was heartbroken. I hated watching his life fall apart over the past 10 years. So much loss that I believe, set the stage for the last most significant stroke. Many times I tried to connect/help/listen and was pushed away. This is a common strategy for early-onset dementia.

Early 2019

Two weeks after his divorce was final Bill suffered stroke #3 maybe #4 and a major cardiovascular event that should have killed him. His doctors told us he was lucky to have survived. His memory was badly injured. Bill can remember incidents from 20 years ago but cannot recall the details of things that happened 20 minutes prior. The stroke has taken a toll on his heart and he is barely able to walk now. He will tell you that he still runs every day 5-6 miles. We just go with it and hope the rehab will go quickly and his voice will be loud.

Today

Bill lives in a wonderful assisted living called the Beachwood Commons in Cleveland, Ohio. He can manage ADL and daily personal care skills. He has a wonderful long-term recall.

This disease has kicked his butt for many years. The depression that we witness daily sucks and want to stand together to support him.

Bill would love to hear from his family and friends. I know he needs love and support and I cannot do this alone. My sister Michelle has held mine and Bill's hands over the last six months. I could not do this without her.

Bill no longer has a cell phone just a landline 1-216-765-3182. J

Please send cards via this website or directly to:

William Deckman
Beachwood Commons
3995 Green Rd
Apartment 223
Beachwood, Ohio 44122

Don't be surprised if you have a phone conversation with him and he calls you back 20 minutes later having no recollection of the earlier conversation. Bill does not know that his short-term memory is injured, creating a frustrating cycle. . Our Alzheimers social worker used this great analogy to describe what is happening to Bill.

"Remember when you were young and you headed down your creepy basement to search for something. BOOM, someone at the top of the basement stairs just played a bad trick on you and turns off the light switch. You go into panic mode not knowing how to get upstairs and wondering when the light would come on.

We are participating in a Cleveland Clinic Brain Health genetic study. This study will look at how or what genes are related to neurological disorders.

I know we cannot change the past but we can move forward with kindness and love. I hope my experience might help someone else in the future.

We hope you will send cards in the mail because it helps heighten his spirit. We have your card tapes all over his room as a reminder of the love and support he has.

You can post stories and notes to this website and we will print them and add them his room.

Thank you to Mr. Bill Pemberton for believing in our uncle. Mr. Pemberton is someone special who "Believed In Bill " and stood up, took action , and saved his life. Thank you, he is safe now.

Please excuse my punctuation, brevity, and spelling errors.

Love- Kim Joseph
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